

REMARKS

Applicants have amended claims 60 and 61 and added new dependent claims 64-67 as set forth above. No new matter has been added by way of this amendment. Applicants note with appreciation the Office's indication claims 1-28, 31-38, and 40-59 are allowable over the prior art of record. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding office action is respectfully requested.

The Office has rejected claims 60-63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,883,988 to Yamamoto et al. (Yamamoto). The Office asserts that Yamamoto discloses a system (fig. 11) with: an elongated optical element 3; at least one opaque structure 3B2 at least partially in a non-opaque portion of the optical element; and a source of light 13₂ positioned to propagate at least a portion of the light through the optical element in a direction generally parallel to a surface of the elongated optical element which faces an object (the object being for example the portion of absorption region 5 which is under electrode 8₂), the opaque structure enhancing and directing the electric field of the light propagating through the optical element into a space outside the optical element 3 to interact with the object.

Yamamoto does not disclose or suggest, "the opaque structure attracting and concentrating the electric field of the light propagating through the optical element into a space outside the optical element to interact with the object" as recited in claim 60 or "the opaque structure attracting and concentrating the electric field of the light into a space outside the optical element to interact with the object" as recited in claim 61. With respect to Yamamoto, the Office's attention is respectfully directed to FIG. 11 in Yamamoto which clearly illustrates that reflection surfaces 3B₁ and 3B₂ simply reflect the optical beams internally. However, there is no teaching or suggestion in Yamamoto of either an attraction or a concentration of the electric field of light propagating through the optical element by what the Office asserts is the claimed opaque structure.

In sharp contrast, as described in paragraph 54 in the above-identified patent application, the opaque structure in the present invention attracts and concentrates the electric field towards the interface. As a result, as discussed in paragraph 10 in the above-identified

patent application, the present invention is able to provide increased spatial resolution for applications, such as optical imaging, data storage, lithography and inspection.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 60 and 61. Since claim 62 depends from and contains the limitations of claim 60 and claim 63 depends from and contains the limitations of claim 61, they are distinguishable over the cited references and are patentable in the same manner as claims 60 and 61.

Applicants have also added new dependent claims 64-67 which are believed to be distinguishable over the cited reference and in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested.

In view of all of the foregoing, Applicants submit that this case is in condition for allowance and such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 20, 2008

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